

Administrative Response to Program Review
Computer Information Systems
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Opening

On April 24, 2009, the Computer Information Systems (CIS) Subject Area Committee (SAC) presented their Program Review findings to an audience of PCC administrators and others with an interest in the discipline. We found both the written report and the presentation to be informative and thought provoking, and are very appreciative of the engagement of this SAC in both the process and reflective intent of program review. We enjoyed learning how the field of CIS has evolved since the last program review, and the particular challenges of teaching in a discipline that must stay apace of changing technology and rapidly shifting economic trends. The presentation was followed by a thoughtful and very interactive discussion of the many components of the review. We are impressed by the steadfastness with which the CIS SAC has held fast to their mission of *preparing students to meet the challenges of information technology for business.*

We would also like to take this opportunity to note the excellence of the written report, which addressed in very informative and coherent ways the variety of questions posed by the program review process. Some of the aspects of the report which particularly stood out:

- Executive Summary of the report was excellent and much appreciated;
- The report contained a thorough discussion of program goals, including a mapping of course outcomes to PCC College-level core outcomes;
- There was specific examination of degree and course level outcomes and inventory of needed revisions;
- Mapping of assessments to course outcomes;
- Effective use, presentation, and analysis of data (enrollment and employment trends, serving a diverse community of learners);
- Assessment through lens of external benchmarks "Guidelines for an Associates Degree in Information Systems" published by the Association for Computing Machinery.

This rest of this response consists of two sections: areas for which we particularly wish to commend the SAC and our response and comments to your recommendations and/or requests.

Of Note

The CIS Program serves students very well, particularly when considered in the light of a constantly shifting, and sometimes turbulent, industry and employment environment. CIS employs a wide array of strategies to support students and promote success, too many to reiterate here. Following is a list of some strategies and approaches we would like to highlight as particularly notable and effective:

- Providing faculty leadership in distance learning, having CIS AAS degree and certificates online since 2002;
- Advisory committee meets throughout the year, beyond requirements.
- Adjusting curriculum based on advisory industry input, such as the inclusion of writing, soft skills and teamwork;
- Extensive articulation agreements with high schools & universities (PSU, OHSU, OIT);
- Collaborative & interdisciplinary approaches such as development of the Project Management Series, working with Radiology & Criminal Justice
- Principal partner in statewide degree in Health Informatics
- Specific attention to and strategies for supporting diverse students (gender, ethnicity, age, etc.);
- CIS tutoring at Sylvania;
- Integration of service learning in CIS classes;
- Commitment to keep faculty professionally current;
- Commitment to the integrity of curriculum and instruction for classes delivered by part-time faculty.

Administrative Response to CIS SACC Recommendations

In general, we concur with most of the CIS recommendations, noting that some are more constrained by funding availability than others, and that requests dependent on funding are typically subject to a variety of campus and district based allocation processes. Overall, we have the usual challenge of supporting a very worthwhile, effective and well-managed program in a time of growing competition for limited resources. The question becomes, what can we do with the resources we have now? In that spirit, here are *administrative responses to specific recommendations made by the CIS SAC*.

SAC Recommendations from Program Review,
followed by *Administrative Response (in italics)*

Student access and success recommendations

1. Access and success measurements are lacking. Better measurements of student

retention, successful completion of degrees and certificates, student employment success need to be developed and the data made available on an annual basis.

PCC is now in the pilot phase of implementing DegreeWorks, which should help a great deal in this arena. CTE programs, such as CIS, will be the first to be implemented. We encourage the CIS faculty to engage with the pilot process in order to contribute to the development and success of DegreeWorks at PCC. We still do not have a good way to track student employment (or other destinations) once they leave PCC, and this is a problem for all of our programs. This remains an important area of advocacy for Institutional Research.

2. Data regarding students who drop and withdraw are anecdotal at best if not missing altogether. Better follow-up measurements for students that drop or withdraw need to be developed and the data made available each term and on an annual basis.

We agree: this is a question of resources and focus. PCC has recently been in the mode of providing access and responding to incredible enrollment surges in the midst of an economic downturn. In this environment, resources are stretched and challenged to also focus on student retention and success. Instructional and Student Development administration continues to advocate for enhanced data measurements to better understand how our students do once they are in the door.

3. Although enrollments are on the rise, many students still only accidentally discover CIS courses. Better and different marketing and advertising strategies for CIS and other CTE programs and courses are needed to attract people to the programs.

Please work with campus resources (Division Deans and campus marketing & advising staff) to find ways to better market the CIS program and raise awareness. Innovations (such as Project Management and Health Informatics) are opportunities to highlight the program. Individual student success stories also present new opportunities for marketing.

Curriculum recommendations

4. CIS at this time consists of 48 courses. Since our courses involve technology that is changing continuously, that's 5+ courses per faculty member that need revision each year. Coupled with the fact that 45/48 are DL courses which also need annual revisions, that's 10+ per faculty member that need revision. More resources need to be focused to solve this challenge.
 - a. · Partial solution: CIS Faculty loads are always 1.078 IFTE (three sections) per term or 3.234 IFTE (nine sections) per year or and additional 2.106

IFTE per year collectively worked above a 1.0 per term load average. Some of that time, 1 section per year per instructor, should be used toward revising our curriculum. For instance, that time could be used to revise two existing courses or develop one new course. With a 1 section per year per faculty member teaching reduction, we'd still be above the 0.90 load per term average across a year and be able to better prepare our teaching materials in this increasingly competitive technological era.

We agree that high tech CTE programs such as CIS typically need more frequent updates than typical lower division collegiate courses. The partial solution proposed impacts scheduling and budgets, which are local campus decisions under the oversight of the Division Dean. We suggest that you work with your Division Dean to identify course revision & development needs that fall outside the norm and explore alternative scheduling that addresses these needs while maintaining instructional workloads as close to 1.0 as possible.

5. CIS needs to continue to seek out new partnerships with other programs as they discover the need for more information systems training in their graduates. More resources need to be focused on this challenge.

Interdisciplinary partnerships are great for students and faculty, and we commend CIS for their work so far in this regard. We encourage you to take advantage of existing resources which will support efforts, such as the recent Teaching and Learning Centers Shirley Anderson Conference, which focused on innovation and collaboration. We believe that proposals might also be made for staff development funds to provide some support for targeted efforts. CIS might consider doing a TLC session inviting other disciplines from areas of potential collaboration.

6. CIS FTE is credited to a single division and campus. Divisions on other campuses have no incentive to accommodate CIS course offerings at their campus since they see no FTE benefit. Additionally, CIS may be missing collaboration opportunities with other programs by the lack of full-time faculty housed on the other campuses. A means of crediting CIS FTE to the campus on which the course offerings are made needs to be developed. A means of posting full-time faculty to other campuses needs to be developed.

As we all discussed at the program review presentation, the centralized CIS model has many advantages along with some challenge,s including the lack of a campus local "advocate" at South East, Rock Creek, and Cascade. While FTE allocation may be part of the challenge, it is not the only element. As you note, faculty collaboration, along with limited classroom space and simple coordination with campus scheduling (which is mostly division based) is also problematical with the centralized model. That is to say, resolving FTE allocation alone will not resolve all of the challenges. This challenge is not unique to CIS, and there is an increasing awareness that as we expand other programs

around the district (welding and nursing come to mind) we need enhanced models that take into consideration these supporting and critical aspects of distributed program effectiveness. At this point in time, we don't have specific solutions to offer, but rather the assurance that administratively we are aware of the challenges and are part of on-going conversations to try to come up with solutions. Ideally, emerging models can be informed by the success and challenges of programs such as CIS, with history and experience in a centralized district-wide CTE program.

Needed resources recommendations

7. Most students expect computer classes on-campus to be taught in computer equipped classrooms. PCC lacks sufficient computer equipped classrooms even at Sylvania to be able to offer our courses. More computer equipped classrooms need to be made available at all campuses. Better accommodation for CIS sections offered at campuses other than Sylvania need to be put in place.

Recent enrollment growth has increased demand for computer-equipped rooms, exacerbating what was already a challenge. As we move forward with Bond planning, sufficient and appropriate lab facilities will be a priority. We encourage members of the CIS SAC to pay attention over the next year for opportunities to provide input to instructional space planning at all of the campuses. In the meantime, all the campuses are looking for shorter-term space solutions. (For example, Rock Creek recently added a computer lab intended to be shared across six disciplines, including CIS. Making this work will require up front scheduling coordination, and some flexibility on course times. Rock Creek scheduling is done on a division basis, and so it could be advantageous to look for a supporting division at Rock Creek to help with scheduling.)

8. Enrollment is growing. CIS is expanding with new course and degrees and certificate offerings. CIS lost full-time faculty with specialized experience due to the last RIF. The part-time-full-time ratio is now out of balance when compared to PCC as a whole. CIS needs to add one additional full-time faculty position in the near-term to target these growth changes and redress the loss of diversity among full-time faculty. This is in addition to filling the existing positions of retiring full-time faculty.

While we agree that CIS is increasing their reliance on PT faculty, we are not clear that the ratio for CIS is "out of balance when compared with PCC as a whole." According to Institutional research, in Fall 09, the % of sections taught across PCC by FT faculty was 36%. The CIS data presented in the program review shows that in Winter 09, 27 of 57 sections were taught by full time faculty, a ratio of 47%. While this may not be ideal, CIS appears to be in a relatively better position than many other disciplines. We also acknowledge that the needs of CTE programs are different, and may need a higher relative proportion of FT faculty than some other programs.

The campuses are responsible for new initiative planning, including new faculty

positions. Since the CIS program is centrally housed at Sylvania, the SAC will need to work with the Division Dean to understand where an additional CIS position fits with campus priorities.

Professional development recommendations

9. Computer and information systems conferences and training are very expensive. Typical training costs are \$500 per day. CIS budgets allow each fulltime faculty member to attend 1/2 day of training per year. While supplemental funding is available, the process for obtaining it is time-consuming; most CIS faculty choose to put whatever extra time they have toward working with their students. More money needs to be allocated to those faculty in disciplines like CIS where the rapid changes in technology are the most critical. Application and release of those funds should be on the advise of the SAC and in the control of the division dean.

We appreciate your frustration in finding sufficient funding to stay current in a constantly changing discipline. Local budgets for training are also a campus resource, to be negotiated with the Division Dean, who must balance the needs of all the programs in the divisions. As you note, there are supplemental funds for professional development available through staff development and the TLC's, and yes, there is some paperwork involved in the application process. These supplemental funds are outside of the instructional budgets, and are an important resource for many different programs and groups. Consequently, this is not a resource that we have the ability to reallocate to Division Deans. Our best advice at this moment is to work closely with the available funding sources and look for opportunities where funding can be combined and leveraged.

In closing, we want to again thank the CIS SAC for sharing the results of your program review with us. We very much enjoyed learning about the CIS program and your many successes and plans for the future. We look forward to working with you to support your on-going work on continuous program improvement.