

**Dean of Instruction Response to
June 5th, 2009 Automotive Service Technology
Program Review
Prepared by Jeff S. Triplett
June 2009**

Your program review started with a very well organized power point presentation/slide show which provided an excellent over view of the automotive industry and how it has evolved over the years. This helped set the stage for the program specific information, including your challenges and opportunities that followed.

Your program review was thoughtful of the changing industry and reflected the challenges this presents you. During the previous decade, even though technology continued to change, the basic concept of the internal combustion engine (ICE) remained the foundation of car manufacturing and, therefore, service repair. More recently, however, a significant change in vehicle propulsion has occurred resulting in hybrid and hybrid-plug-in technology.

Early in the academic year, you made a decision to not simply incorporate the new technology, but established a vision of becoming the premier training center for hybrid, hybrid/plug-in technology. Based on this vision, you developed a comprehensive and aggressive plan to have all full time faculty trained in hybrid technology, purchase 7 vehicles, obtain necessary tools and equipment, install two charging stations and undertake a thorough review/curriculum update.

You are to be commended for your foresight and accomplishments in these areas. All faculty have been trained, 7 vehicles and associated equipment have been purchased, one charging station is currently being installed and significant work has been accomplished regarding updates to the curriculum. It will be interesting to monitor student feedback as this new technology and material is rolled out for Fall term 2009. Additionally, your vision extended beyond the credit earning/degree seeking students to include technician upgrade training. Your plans to offer continuing education units (CEUs) covering hybrid and eventually plug-in vehicles to technicians is visionary and could prove to be an important revenue stream for future program development.

Your phase II plans closely mirrors that of your hybrid project, but for hybrid/plug-in vehicles. The department was invited to participate in a USDOE grant, which if approved, will help fund the purchase of 2 plug-in hybrids, a hybrid conversion kit, a charging station as well as funding to help develop curriculum. Additionally, through years of entrepreneurial activities, the department's balances' in your 1900 and 4-fund accounts will help underwrite other expenses associated with vehicle purchasing, staff training, and curriculum development.

The economy has resulted in a challenge for the General Motors-ASEP program while it has proven to be a modest stimulus for the ASRT program. A fundamental component of the GM-ASEP program is dealership sponsored students. Nationally, by design this program alternates from one on-campus term to a dealer co-op term, repeating throughout the length of the program. Given the state of the economy and the problems plaguing GM, dealers are reluctant to sponsor students. For these reasons, no new GM-ASEP students will be started during the coming academic year though second year GM students will be continued. During spring term 2010 the situation will be assessed and a decision will have to be made regarding the program's future. Given good support, the program will be continued and new students enrolled. A continued lack of dealer/sponsors will, likely, result in the program being shelved. Should this happen, the instructional resource will be moved to the ASRT program to assist with the on going development and instruction of the hybrid, plug-in and alternative fuels project.

Given the economy, cars are being kept longer which ultimately results in an increased need for repairs, thus causing a slight increase in business for independent shops that, in turn, need more trained technicians. As this trend continues, increased demand for your program graduates will occur.

Late in spring term 2009 the department learned, through Steve Smith, of a long standing error with course credits. In brief, the 4-credit mods have insufficient contact hours. While this is both perplexing and challenging, the timing has been good. The introduction of hybrid technology initially would have created a problem regarding total credits for the program. Now, however, a reduction in the credits per mod could facilitate the introduction of new hybrid/electric courses in the program. Your commitment to address and resolve these issues during the coming year are to be commended.

Your review concluded with thoughtful recommendations reflective of your program analysis. We offer the following observations and thoughts:

The Automotive Service Technology Summary of Recommendations:

- Make the best use of the facility, tools, equipment, and resources that we have
This is an excellent recommendation. You have already demonstrated abilities in these areas, though as you noted your limited budgets will continue to make this challenging. The initial plans for the current bond include some improvements in your area including the replacement of the storage containers with a proper storage facility, resealing of the shop floor, and repurposing of the dyno room. As architects are hired, there may be an opportunity to revisit your needs relative to your facility.
- Address/Correct contact hours to credit hours

You are to be commended for noting this in your program review. By approaching this as an opportunity to incorporate more content e.g., hybrid/plug-in technology you have already set the stage for success. We suggest that you meet early in Fall term with Sally Earll from the curriculum office to explore alternative ways of packaging courses/certificates/options for your program.

- Better funding for parts budget
As noted, this is an issue that plagues various departments throughout the district. The DOI have met with and plan to continue meeting with the Associate Vice President of Finance to explore solutions to this and other related issues.

- Budget for new Plug-in curriculum
- Budget for instructor / staff training in Plug-in technology
- Budget for replacement of aging tools and equipment
- Budget for new equipment to meet industry standards
- Budget for an increase in the number of student computers
- Offer more fleet / technician continuing education classes
- Find and nurture new corporate/business sponsors
- Get additional industry representation on our advisory board
- Apply for grants and other funding sources that will help us support our program
- Look for money available for supporting/developing “green technologies”

Budgets, or more accurately, the lack of adequate budgets are problematic. There are 6 revenue streams/sources of funding which may prove helpful. First, work with your division dean/DOI to maximize the use of funds accumulated in your department's various 1900 and 4 fund accounts. Second, engage the Grants office in discussions about funding opportunities. Third, develop a plan to reach out to the automotive industry seeking their support. Fourth, ramp-up your offerings of CEUs for technicians with special emphasis on hybrid technology. Fifth, work with the marketing department to promote your hybrid/plug-in training opportunities, possibly including coverage in the community education publication. Sixth, work with your division dean to obtain additional, one-time funding through margin earnings. While these funds aren't permanent, they could help off-set expenses associated with one-time purchases, repairs and upgrades.

- Install enough band width to accommodate computer use

We suggest you work directly with Michael Heuer, TSS Customer Support Manager, to ensure that he has a full understanding of your computing needs. In turn, he should be able to help develop a plan to best meet those needs.

- Monitor student progress to ensure more students complete CG209 and Co-op

During your review, you noted the list of exceptional services provided by Robin Burwell, your Perkins support. Please consider working with her and George Knox to improve the completion rates for both CG 209 and Co-op.

- Update the programs core outcomes map

While we realize this takes time but is a critically important step and commend you for including it among your recommendations.

- Maintain relationships with student sponsor dealerships

Again, this is an important function which will help keep your program connected to members of the automotive industry.

Department members in attendance:

Russ Jones, Chair
Dan Kidney, Instructor
Leslie Macaulay, Instructor
Bart Ouchida, Instructor
Scott Morgan, Instructor
Kim Kittinger, Instructor
Robin Burwell, Perkins support

Panel Present

Chris Chairsell, Vice President Academic and Student Affairs
Laura Massey, Director Institutional Effectiveness
Kendra Cawley, Dean of Instructional Support
Scott Huff, Dean of Instruction Cascade Campus
Jeff S. Triplett, Dean of Instruction Sylvania Campus

C: auto program review response