

**Administrative Response to Program Review  
Computer Application Systems/Office Systems  
Prepared by Dr. Birgitte Ryslinge  
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On April 23, 2010, the Computer Applications Systems/Office Systems 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 CAS/OS 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 student panel, and getting this perspective on the program was enlightening for us as well as, we imagine, to a certain degree for the faculty. All in all, we had a thoughtful and very interactive discussion of the many components of the review. We are impressed by the steadfastness with which the CAS/OS SAC has held fast to their mission to *offer a program that educates and trains students as professional administrative assistants and web designers/developers... by providing courses that address ... software applications for mastery, problem solving, critical thinking, human relations, communications, current computer technologies, work-readiness, computer literacy, and transfer requirements.*

We would also like to take this opportunity to note the strength of the written report, which addressed in very informative and coherent ways most of the questions posed by the program review process. The report was well organized, easy to read and understand. It included a well defined set of specific program goals (pg 8) and included good analysis and presentation of the data. We had hoped to see assessment more fully addressed in the report, and are asking that the CAS/OS SAC provide us with a written addendum, which we say more about later in this response.

This Administrative Response will: A) note particular highlights of the Program Review, B) identify work still to be completed, and C) pose some questions for further consideration, and D) provide the administrative response to the recommendations

**Of Note**

- The student panel: these impressive individuals provided real life evidence of your success in teaching, our diversity of students, as well as the diversity of curriculum and choices in your program.
- The CAS/OS program responds to a rapidly changing environment. You have added 1 associate degree and 7 certificates since last review (and went from 4 to 12 degree or certificate choices).
- CAS/OS has an understanding of, and commitment to serve, the growing proportion of non-majors.
- You have embraced DL (despite operational and strategic challenges), and are a leading program in exploring hybrid (CL-Web).

- You based your review on lots of data on students, including DL (and interest in fully on-line degrees).
- You make a significant contribution to the college by providing “over the shoulder training” for faculty and staff.
- CASOL pilot program is a model that we hope will be emulated in other disciplines (we know this is starting). It is evident that CASOL has made a big difference in a number of student lives.
- You have engaged in regional collaboration and worked through the Oregon Consortium for the statewide Administrative Office Professional Degree.
- The written report gave a good discussion and presentation of information on resources (Section 5), which helps us understand the specifics of program supports and barriers across campuses.
- The written report also included a very good discussion of the particular challenges of serving overall growth (which has been significant) in a rapidly shifting market when you are situated within a very large educational organization with less than agile processes and systems.

### **To Be Completed**

Program review guidelines (<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/academic/program-review/>) identify areas to particularly include during the program review process. Assessment of outcomes (at the course, program and college level) should be included, and we did not find this addressed in the report. Furthermore, programs are asked to consider how the outcomes of assessments lead to program changes. We are confident that CAS/OS does in fact approach their program with this spirit of continuous improvement, but it is vital that we document and provide evidence of how assessment and related improvement occurs. Program review is an important vehicle for that provision of evidence to external stakeholders, and also allows programs to provide models and share best practices across disciplines.

Assessment was identified as an area of focus for PCC during our very recent accreditation visit, and the April 2010 Interim Accreditation Report notes 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.”*

**We respectfully request that CAS/OS SAC provide us with a written addendum to the program review, to address the following:**

- A. Addresses progress on those elements of the Program Review Guidelines Section 2 <http://www.pcc.edu/resources/academic/program-review/documents/ProgramDisciplineReviewGuidelinesFINALMay2809.pdf> that are not included in the existing report.

- B. Assures that the various outcome and assessment related PCC web pages are up to date for CAS/OS and inclusive of recent curricular changes. Your contact is Dean of Instructional Support, Kendra Cawley
- a. Degree and Certificate Outcomes,<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/academic/degree-outcome/cas.html>
  - b. Core Outcomes Mapping Matrix,  
<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/academic/core-outcomes/cas.html>

### **For Further Consideration**

- Given your leadership and growth in DL and CLWEB, it would be of interest to see data and discussion of what's working best and what you have learned about the effective use of this modality. We know that CAS faculty are part of the DL task force, and appreciate your engagement in this effort.
- Speaking of CLWEB, both research and your students present at the review concur that this hybrid approach combines the best of both worlds (and also manages to leverage limited resources such as computer labs). We encourage you to consider more CLWEB classes in addition to on-campus and on-line classes. Consider packaging CLWEB classes so that two or three might be taken on one day, especially on the weekend.
- We are not sure what the course challenge practice is in CAS/OS, but the students implied that challenges might be useful, but also agreed that they sometimes needed 'the whole course' to fill in holes in their knowledge. There may be nothing to do here, but this could be an area of exploration for the SAC.
- Differentiating and/or blending of CAS, MM, GD, and CIS:

This is a topic that generated a great deal of conversation at the program review, and also subsequently among the administrators. We have a number of suggestions, comments and questions.

There may well be a need to take a formal look at how certain specialty areas (such as digital media for example) are taught within our traditional organization by SAC and examine how well this organization serves students.

We would like you to use the CAS/OS Program Review as a springboard to begin the discussion around the duplication that may be occurring between the disciplines of CAS, CIS, GD, and MM. Perhaps a joint task force needs to be formed to explore collaboration instead of competition? In order for such an effort to be successful, it would need to include representation from all of the impacted disciplines. For example, it might be interesting and fruitful to look at only the digital media classes in CAS and CIS. Both departments are very broad and the areas where they intersect with MM and GD are limited to a group of classes in digital media/web design and development.

In the meantime, is there already a website or flyer describing the differences and similarities in the overlapping curriculum areas? If not, this would be well to develop, and again, it should be done in conjunction with the other SAC(s) so that students receive a unified message.

On a slightly different note, we'd like to draw your attention to the overlap in courses CAS 133, BA 131 and even to some extent CIS 120. While there are certainly differences, there appears to be a good deal of overlap. Students who take both CAS 133 and BA 131 have complained to Deans about the similarities (and also students who take CIS 120 and either CAS 133 or BA 131.) As we move toward addressing computer literacy, this may be a good time to take a look at all these courses, again, working with CIS and BA.

### **Administrative Response to CAS/OS SACC Recommendations**

In general, we concur with most of the CAS recommendations, noting that some are more constrained by funding availability, and that requests dependent on funding are typically subject to a variety of campus and district based allocation processes. Additionally, some of the challenges identified by CAS/OS are rooted in college processes and practices that are not easily nor quickly changed. 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 CAS/OS SAC*.

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

##### **A. Computer Literacy at PCC**

*While there are many sound reasons for considering computer literacy as a basic and required competency for PCC students, it is well outside of the purview of the Deans of Instruction to add to the established and agreed upon PCC Core Outcomes (<http://www.pcc.edu/resources/academic/core-outcomes/>). We encourage you to share your thinking about computer literacy with the Learning Assessment Council, as there may well be assessment possibilities for computer literacy related to the existing core outcomes (Professional Competence comes to mind).*

*Beyond the core outcome approach, we are sure you can appreciate that "all student" requirements are not lightly nor easily implemented at PCC. Many, many stakeholders must be involved. That said, there is nothing precluding a SAC from providing information or mechanisms that help students to voluntarily assess course specific levels of readiness (see Math <http://spot.pcc.edu/academ/math/placement.htm>). It might be interesting for CAS/OS to work with a couple of other disciplines to develop and pilot a voluntary computer literacy assessment tool that might ultimately be available in PCC testing centers.*

*Any migration towards an institutional computer literacy requirement is likely to occur over a period of time, and work done now by SAC's might be foundational and quite useful. So we suggest that you do develop recommendations for DivDeans and DOIs to consider. Please also involve Associate DOSD at all four campuses since all four Testing Centers could be impacted. You might also look outside PCC, possibly Chemeketa and Central Oregon CC have some sort of computer literacy assessment process in place.*

*Computer literacy wasn't included in the AAOT to be in-place Fall 2010 because all 17 CCs couldn't accommodate such a requirement, but there is interest in such a requirement and it will be considered in future revisions, probably 3-5 years out.*

*A related area is basic computer literacy. At what point does keyboarding belong in Developmental Education? We suggest the SAC engage in a consideration of whether it is still appropriate to offer Basic Keyboarding for college credit.*

### **B. Increase the number of computer classrooms**

*Recent enrollment growth has increased demand for computer-equipped rooms, exacerbating what was already a challenge. As we move forward with Bond planning, we assure you that sufficient and appropriate lab facilities will be a priority. Additionally, we will be exploring models and technology placement that allow for greater flexibility in classrooms so they might serve as both lecture and computer labs.*

*We encourage members of the CAS 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 that do not have dedicated computer labs.)*

### **C. Address the competition inherent in the DL courses**

*We certainly acknowledge a level of dysfunction and unintended consequences of the FTE driven DL model. As you note, this is one of the areas that the DL task force is looking at. While a definitive administrative answer might be expeditious, we believe this representative group is best positioned to work through the many issues and make recommendations that will work for PCC. The DL Task force will report to the EAC, and also to the Vice President of Academic and Student Services, and we hope to see some specific recommendations on at least some of the issues beginning in Fall 2010. In the meantime, there are models emerging where SACs have worked out ways of transitioning from a competitive to a more collaborative mode. You might ask your SAC Administrative Liaison for some examples.*

### **D. Increase the FT to PT faculty ratio district-wide**

### **E. Increase the number of FT faculty to correspond to enrollment growth at RC and SE**

We are well aware of the impact of growth on FT/PT faculty ratios. The reality is also that programs such as CAS/OS that need to constantly evolve curriculum will experience this

pressure to an even higher degree. As you note, RC has responded in the short run by creating a department chair (previously it was split with BA) and creating a one-year temporary FT faculty for the 10-11 academic year with margin (growth) funds. Additionally, depending upon available permanent funding, both RC and SE are planning to add a FT faculty position (SE would be shared with Sylvania).

#### **F. Make district-wide computer and software purchases**

*This is another area which benefits from coordination, not just across the campuses but importantly with TSS. We believe we've improved, but we certainly need to continue our improvement, in coordinating across the district. In particular, we need to make sure that SE is on the same page as CA, RC, and SY since SE has operated/supported CAS classes differently than the rest of the college in the past. A Division Dean (Julie Kopet) has now been identified to provide support for CAS/OS at SE, and this should provide enhanced coordination in a variety of areas, including providing similar hardware and software platforms. This is an area where the Division Deans can provide support in coordination across the campuses and with TSS.*

#### **G. Make software updates easily accessible (free) for all faculty**

*We are making TSS aware of your concerns, and will ask your four Division Deans to track this issue and try to see what resolution is possible.*

#### **H. Streamline Curriculum Process**

*The curriculum approval process does have many intermediate steps, and can be challenging to programs with more rapidly changing curriculum. It would be too lengthy to explain all the nuances here, but the variety of steps have been repeatedly examined and found necessary to ensure that we are consistent with legal and accreditation guidelines, as well as the intent of the EAC (to which the Curriculum and Degrees and Certificate committees report). The PCC Curriculum office has many resources to help faculty through the process, and we encourage you to take full advantage. <http://www.pcc.edu/resources/academic/eac/curriculum/>*

#### **I. Increase Speed of or Alter Instructor DL/Blackboard Training Process**

*We agree, it would be useful to have a process which accommodates both folks who are highly skilled in computer technology and folks who need to teach sooner than a two-term lead on training allow. We will ensure that this idea is considered by the DL task force, and also ask the Distance Learning office to consider a test of necessary content and outcomes, rather than require a class based on seat time.*

#### **J. Tutors at all campuses**

*We agree and would like to see more tutoring (and more consistency) in many subjects across the district. Increases need to be locally funded, so CAS faculty should work with the Division Deans to ensure that this need is considered whenever new funding becomes available. As we know, resources have been quite limited, and may get worse: however, we should keep this*

*need on the radar and ensure that it is captured in our planning for when funding does become available.*

### **K. Marketing New Degrees, Certificates and Courses**

Often our new degrees, certificates and classes are missed by students who may be interested in them. More effective marketing, beyond just the brochures, would help get the word out to students about what we have to offer.

*Please work with campus resources (Division Deans and campus marketing & advising staff) to find ways to better market the CAS/OS program and raise awareness. Innovations are opportunities to highlight the program. Individual student success stories also present new opportunities for marketing.*

### **Closing**

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

Administrative Response submitted by Birgitte Ryslingle, on behalf of all your Deans of Instruction

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