

Administrative Response to Program Review

Economics

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The Economics SAC presented its Program Review in the Spring of 2004. This Administrative Response is long overdue and I apologize for that. Your patience in waiting for this response is appreciated.

Effective support of instruction requires open dialogue and continuous discussion between faculty members and administrators. That has not happened in the past as much as it will happen in the future under our evolving Academic Planning process. This will include annual discussions with your SAC Administrative Support Person as well as an opportunity to meet with the Deans of Instruction on an as-needed basis. That process, however, is separate from this Program Review process which focuses on teaching and learning, and what is addressed in the remainder of this document.

The Economics SAC is to be commended for the thorough job in planning for and ultimately constructing its review. While the time required (starting in October 2002 and presenting in May 2004) must have seemed long at the time, your final program does a fine job in addressing strengths and challenges, along with addressing the need to revise and assess course and discipline outcomes. The dedication of the full- and part-time faculty members who contributed to the effort is acknowledged.

Your efforts in considering, defining, and redefining discipline and course outcomes in the context of what is done at other institutions and what is needed by other PCC programs is appreciated. We recognize that this work is on-going

and thank you for revising CCOGs for three of your six courses in the last year. Your continued efforts in this area will be welcomed.

Your work on improving teaching and learning are related to trends in content and modality. It is clear that you are aware of and attuned to what is happening in lower division Economics education nationally and in Oregon and we thank you for staying abreast of your field. Your professional development activities are evidence of your commitment to continuous improvement of the Economics curriculum.

Your efforts to retain students, e.g., including EC 200 as a survey course, providing virtual office hours, and contacting students who have stopped attending classes, are welcomed. We are grateful for your continued assistance to students in reaching their goals in your courses and beyond.

With regards to recommendations included in your review, we make the following comments. Note that we also ask questions. We would be glad to meet with you to hear your thoughts on these comments and questions.

Curriculum

- The on-going analysis and discussion regarding EC 200 and EC 201 in making the courses more issue-basis and relevant is laudable. Are there similar efforts for the other EC courses?
- Meeting with other SACs to determine the need and purpose of Economics in their programs increases the visibility of your subject matter and will hopefully reveal valuable information. How have these meetings gone and what have they revealed?

- Connecting assessment of outcomes with revision to the curriculum is key to maintaining appropriate coursework. How have these discussions gone?
- Meeting with colleagues at PSU to understand better what is done there in lower division Economics and expected for success at the upper division will assist our students when they transfer. How have these meetings gone?
- Providing readily available instructional information is helpful to students. For example, some of you utilize Web Easy as a means of conveying information. Some of you probably use MyPCC for similar purposes. Do you have plans for other resources, e.g., a SAC-wide site?
- Conducting surveys of former students could be beneficial. Have you been able to do so?

Professional Development

- Attending meetings and conferences is important in terms of “getting away from it all” to a place where you can interact with others in your profession. We recognize that funding is limited and have tried to increase funding. Have any of you been able to take advantage of the Staff Development Office’s offer of \$500 every two years for this purpose?

Recruitment and Retention of Students

- Surveying students should lead to better understanding of their goals and the effectiveness of your teaching. Are you using any commercial on-line survey tools, e.g. Survey Monkey, to customize surveys? How do you conduct these surveys?

Obtaining Needed Resources

- The idea of instructional units on the state's budgetary and tax structure is intriguing. How has that effort gone?
- Your interest in service learning opportunities for students is appreciated. Have you been able to grow the number of students participating? What kinds of opportunities are available?

In looking to the future of the program and in preparing for your next Program Review, which we suggest be slated for the Fall of 2009, please consider the following issues in addition to the standard Program Review questions.

- In light of the growth of the college, including the likely expansion of Southeast Center, and the probability of a bond issue that would result in construction projects as early as 2010, what might Economics look like in the future? How might on-line, hybrid, or interactive television delivery methods – or technologies we haven't even thought about it yet – fit in with traditional modalities?
- For all modalities, consider the work of others, including those at Oregon's other 16 community colleges and 7 OUS institutions. There is considerable administrative and legislative pressure to provide a seamless – more/better/faster – pathway for students “swirling” between institutions. Collaborative efforts that promote effective and efficient educational paths will be appreciated by students and tax payers, among others.
- What can we – faculty and administration – do together to better assess student outcomes for students in, or moving on to, professional technical education programs or students transferring to four-year programs, including students majoring in Economics and related fields? How will we assess outcomes achievement uniformly in the future?

- How do we most effectively allocate resources – full- and part-time faculty, material and supply budgets, equipment funds – around a multi-campus district? What needs to be included in discussions?
- Are there steps that we can take to both expand our pool of part-time instructors and improve the diversity of the pool? Would, for example, it be possible to have current graduate students at local universities be instructors under the mentorship of veteran instructors?

Thank you for considering these and other issues. Thank you also for your continued efforts to make the college's Economics curriculum one about which we can take pride.