

Program Review – Annual Program/Discipline Update
Administrative Response and Follow Up
Spring 2021-2022

Program/Discipline: Landscape Technology

SAC Chair(s): Elizabeth Brewster

SAC Administrative Liaison (Director or Program Dean): Karen Sanders

Other Dean(s) or Director(s): N/A

Department Chair(s): Jenn Peters

Other Faculty / Staff: David Sandrock, Luke McKinnon

Date: April 15, 2022

Administrative Response

I would like to thank the Landscape Technology Program (LAT) for the hard work, dedication and service your entire faculty and staff team provide to your students and to Portland Community College. Your program has been successful for many years, and I would like to commend all of you for maintaining this quality during the chaos of the last two plus years. Thank you!

This administrative response is intended to both recognize your efforts, and provide you with some suggestions for the future. Specifically, it will:

1. Highlight the strengths and successes of the program as evidenced in your report
2. Recognize areas of challenge or concern
3. Address your future goals
4. Provide recommendations for next steps

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Strengths & successes of the program as evidenced in your report

Enrollment: I would like to commend the department for maintaining consistent (and in some cases increased) enrollment over the past two plus years. While college-wide enrollment in CTE programs fell significantly between spring 2020 and the current term, enrollments in LAT have remained strong. This is a reflection on the quality of the program and the dedication of the faculty and staff to student success.

Strong and individualized support for students: I would like to highlight the department's observation that the program advisor, Suzanne Najafdari, plays a critical role in supporting student success in the LAT courses. It is important to recognize that Suzanne has continued to

provide this individualized support - critical to students' success - in spite of the chaos and changes that have resulted from the reorganization and advising redesign. As we move forward, it is extremely important that LAT, and other CTE programs, do not lose this targeted and wrap-around support provided to students by Suzanne, and others in similar roles.

Engagement with industry partners: Please continue creating and nurturing relationships with industry partners. Strategies such as bringing in guest speakers, recruiting industry professionals as adjunct instructors, and placing students in valuable co-op experiences have proven successful to ensure that the program is in tune with current industry trends and needs.

Resiliency: The program has successfully navigated simultaneous and significant change in the past two years. The rapid pivot to remote learning as a result of COVID-19, the vacancy of your instructional support tech positions for many months, the change in leadership, the challenges of returning to campus and offering courses in the context of time consuming safety planning - all happened at the same time - and yet you continue to offer high quality instruction and support for your students. You are amazing!

Areas of Challenge (highlighted by the SAC)

Challenge: Lower success rates in LAT 271

Response: Thank you for being creative and proactive in providing additional support for students in this challenging course. Preliminary results seem to indicate that having dedicated tutoring and two instructors (or an instructor and a class aide) are making a difference. I encourage you to continue these practices and to continue to engage with the class instructors to identify creative ways to support students.

Challenge: Degree and Certificate completion is an inadequate measure of success for LAT students.

Response: Thank you for naming this very important reality. My understanding is that the department has struggled with the disconnect - between stated goals of incoming students, industry-expressed needs, and traditional higher education measures of success - for many years. I would like to suggest that we address this challenge head on, and begin an intentional conversation around what the program will / should / could look like in both the near and distant future - within the very real context of limited fiscal and human resources.

Reflection on Program Objectives

I support the goals listed in your report and suggest the following next steps:

Goal: Reaching out to the Latinx workforce in the landscape industry

Suggested Next Steps:

- Intentionally include this topic as part of the broader discussion about the future state of the program.

- Identify challenges and barriers experienced in previous work done with non-credit workshops and use this information, in conjunction with recent structural changes that have happened as a result of the reorganization, to inform the development of a future pilot.

Goal: Pursuing new hybrid/online modalities in the future

Suggested Next Steps:

- Evaluate the 'flipped' model currently being used to teach the spring term math class - could you expand this model to other courses?
- Continue the broader discussion around 'lessons learned' during remote operations - focusing on identifying which of these teaching strategies might be permanently incorporated into the program.

Goal: Updating the drafting lab to include computers and updated technology

Suggested Next Steps:

- The new drafting lab is on track to be available for fall 2022 classes

Goal: Reaching new populations through improved marketing

Suggested Next Steps:

- Work with the Program Dean to tap into emerging support from the Print Center around program specific marketing.

Goal: Partnering with the Advisory Board to stay current with industry practices /

Offering new classes in response to changing needs in the industry

- Continue holding regular Advisory Board meetings and eliciting feedback from them on their immediate and longer term needs
- Incorporate information learned from engagement with the Advisory Board, into broader discussions about the future focus of the Program.

Conclusion:

Thank you for putting together a comprehensive and meaningful Annual Program Update. The LAT program is strong and I commend all of you on your resilience, creativity and dedication to the students. I look forward to engaging with you in your future work.

Thank you,

Karen Sanders, Pathway Dean - Advanced & Applied Technologies